The definitive version of this chapter is available as:
Seedhouse, Conversation Analysis as Research Methodology in *Applying Conversation Analysis* eds. Richards and Seedhouse, Palgrave Macmillan 2004.

Chapter 15

Conversation analysis as research methodology

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The aims of this concluding chapter are to tie together a number of themes which have emerged from the chapters in the collection and to reflect on the processes of research manifested in the chapters, positioning these in relation to linguistic and social science research paradigms. A frequent complaint by researchers outside CA is that CA practitioners tend not to make their methodology and procedures comprehensible and accessible to researchers from other disciplines. It has sometimes been acknowledged by CA practitioners (Peräkylä 1997) that more could be done in this respect. A full explication of CA methodology and procedures would start with a discussion of the ethnomethodological principles underpinning CA. Considerations of space prohibit such a discussion here; however, see Bergmann (1981), Heritage (1984b) and Seedhouse (2004). Similarly, this chapter cannot provide an introduction to CA methodology; however, see Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998; Psathas 1995; Seedhouse 2004; ten Have 1999. In this first section I will focus on two areas relevant to this collection, namely the CA view of language and the emic perspective.

CA's origins in sociology and specifically ethnomethodology entail a different perspective on the status and interest of language itself from that typical of linguistics. CA's primary interest is in the social act and only marginally in language, whereas a linguist's primary interest is normally in language. In descriptivist linguistics, the interest is in examining how aspects of language are organized in relation to each other. CA, by contrast, studies how social acts are organized in interaction. As part of this, CA is interested in how social acts are packaged and delivered in linguistic terms. The fundamental CA question 'Why this, in this way, right now?' captures the interest in talk as social action, which is delivered in particular linguistic formatting, as part of an unfolding sequence. The CA perspective on the primacy of the social act is illustrated by chapters in this collection. For example, Gafaranga and Britten found that general practitioners systematically use different 'social' opening sequences to talk different professional relationships into being and hence to establish different professional contexts. This is an example of CA analysts' interest in linguistic forms; not so much for their own sake, but rather in the way in which they are used to embody and express subtle differences in social actions with social consequences.

The distinction between emic and etic perspectives is vital to the argument in this chapter. The distinction originated in linguistics and specifically in phonology, namely in the difference between phonetics and phonemics. Pike's definition of etic and emic perspectives broadened interest in the distinction in the social sciences:

> The etic viewpoint studies behaviour as from outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system. The emic

> viewpoint results from studying behaviour as from inside the system.
>
> (Pike 1967: 37)

There is no sense that either perspective is inherently superior to the other, and CA does not claim that social actions and emic perspectives are inherently more important than language or etic perspectives per se; it is simply the case that CA's unrelenting aim is to portray social action in interaction from an emic perspective. What CA means by an emic perspective, however, is not merely the participants' perspective, but the perspective from within the sequential environment in which the social actions were performed. Here the interactants talk their social world into being by employing the context-free interactional architecture in context-sensitive ways. The participants display in the interaction those terms of reference which they employ and these provide us with access to the emic perspective.

This point can be illustrated using an example from Bloch (this volume) which reveals how a dysarthric individual is able to co-construct words and multi-word utterances with the help of another person. The norms of turn-taking in conversation (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974) specify that one speaker usually speaks at a time and that turns may be exchanged when a turn-constructional unit is complete; this constitutes the context-free machinery. Although the mother (M) does not follow these norms, we understand the significance of her social acts by reference to them. The degree of M's help in co-construction is indexed and documented by the intervention of repetition before TCUs are complete and by the candidate expansions. In other words, the interactants perform their social actions *precisely by normative reference to the model of turn-taking***.** The interactional organizations (turn-taking,

sequence, repair and preference) themselves are stated in context-free terms, but the vital point is that participants employ these context-free organizations in a context-sensitive way to display their social actions. It is because the participants (and we as analysts) are able to identify the gap between the context-free model and its context-sensitive implementation that they (and we as analysts) are able to understand the social significance of the context-sensitive implementation. So the CA conception of an emic perspective cannot be disembedded from the sequential context, which provides the interface between context-free architecture and context-sensitive implementation. This is why CA considers that interviewing participants post-hoc cannot provide an emic perspective as understood here.

Research Methods and Concepts

It follow from the discussion above that CA's aim to develop an emic perspective on talk means that many of its assumptions and practices will necessarily be radically different from research methodologies with different goals. At this point I will attempt to position CA in relation to typical social science research methods and concepts such as validity, reliability, generalisability, epistemology, quantification and triangulation, as well as explicating the CA position on 'context'. The aim of this section is to facilitate mutual understanding between the different paradigms in which CA, linguistics and social sciences operate. A number of points need to be made beforehand. Firstly, qualitative researchers often object that the concepts of validity and reliability derive from quantitative approaches and sometimes propose alternative criteria to be applied to qualitative research; these issues are discussed by Bryman (2001: 31-2). Secondly, as Peräkylä (1997: 216) notes, ‘The specific techniques of

securing reliability and validity in different types of qualitative research are not the same.' Thirdly, the goal of developing an emic perspective on naturally occurring interaction means that CA has had to develop many procedures and practices which are rather different to mainstream research methodologies. Fourthly, Peräkylä (1997: 202) notes that, until his own publication, there had been 'no accessible discussions available on issues of validity and reliability in conversation analytic studies.' This does not mean that CA practitioners have not been interested in these issues. On the contrary, it may be argued that all CA work has been (on one level) an attempt at a process exposition of what exactly is involved in and meant by ensuring validity and reliability in the analysis of talk. However, CA practitioners have often phrased the discussion in terms which are only accessible to other practitioners, with the unintended result that the CA perspective has often been misunderstood by social science and linguistic researchers.[1]

Reliability

Peräkylä (1997: 206) identifies the key factors in relation to reliability as the selection of what is recorded, the technical quality of recordings and the adequacy of transcripts; Ten Have (1999) provides a very detailed account of this area. Another aspect of reliability is the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable or replicable (Bryman 2001: 29), and the way CA studies present their data is of crucial significance here. Many research methodologies do not present their primary data in their publications and hence the reliability of major sections of the researchers' analyses is not available for scrutiny. By contrast, it is standard practice for CA studies to include the transcripts of the data, and increasingly to make audio and video

files available electronically via the Web. Furthermore, because CA studies (as exemplified in this collection) display their analyses, they make transparent the process of analysis for the reader. This enables the reader to analyse the data themselves, to test the analytical procedures which the author has followed and the validity of his/her analysis and claims. In this way, all of the analyses of data in this collection are rendered repeatable and replicable to the reader in so far as this is possible. For example, Packett (this volume) describes how he recorded expert interviewers using insertion sequences and also noticed that his student interviewers failed to produce these sequences in the practice interview situation. His chapter provides sufficient information to permit others to replicate his procedure with other groups of journalism students. Is Packett's analysis reliable? The analysis was originally presented at a seminar for comment and was then peer-reviewed by a number of editors and reviewers. Indeed, it is standard practice for CA practitioners to take their data and analyses to data workshops and to send their work to other practitioners for comment before sending them for publication. Most importantly, however, the data and the analysis are publicly available for challenge by any reader; in many other research methodologies readers do not have access to these.

Internal Validity

We will now consider four kinds of validity in relation to qualitative research: internal, external, ecological and construct validity (Bryman 2001: 30). Internal validity is concerned with the soundness, integrity and credibility of findings. Do the data prove what the researcher says they prove or are there alternative explanations? Many CA procedures which seem strange to non-practitioners are based on a concern

for ensuring internal validity whilst developing an emic perspective, which reflects the participants' perspective rather than the analyst's. How do CA analysts know what the participants' perspective is? Because the participants document their social actions to each other in the details of the interaction by normative reference to the interactional organizations, as explained above. We as analysts can access the emic perspective in the details of the interaction and by reference to those same organizations. Clearly, the details of the interaction themselves provide the only justification for claiming to be able to develop an emic perspective. Therefore, CA practitioners make no claims beyond what is demonstrated by the interactional detail without destroying the emic perspective and hence the whole internal validity of the enterprise.

Ten Have (1999: 27) details a number of aspects of CA practice which often astound non-practitioners. These can be explained (from one angle) as being absolutely necessary in order to maintain validity in an emic perspective. The first aspect Ten Have mentions is obsession with ‘trivial’ detail. However, since the emic perspective can only be portrayed by reference to the minute interactional detail, this is vital. Secondly, CA does not tend to use existing theories of language, society, psychology etc. to explain the interaction. This would replace the emic perspective with an analyst's perspective, unless it can be shown in the details of the interaction that the participants themselves are orienting to such theories. Thirdly, CA allegedly refuses to take context into account as it declines to invoke ‘obviously relevant’ contextual features such as participants' social status, gender, race etc. Since there are an indefinite number of ‘external’ aspects of cultural, social or personal identity or context which could be potentially relevant to any given instance of talk-in-interaction, an emic

analysis must show which of these innumerable, potentially relevant characteristics are actually procedurally relevant to those participants at that moment; this can only be accomplished by analysing the details of the interaction. Benwell and Stokoe (this volume), for example, avoid the *a priori* assumption that resistance to academic identity is linked to gender in UK university tutorials. They find that both male and female students use the same interactional strategies to resist academic identity and conclude that the participants themselves do not display an orientation to gender in this regard. Similarly, Egbert (this volume) considers the extent to which the category 'non-native' is procedurally relevant to the interaction.

External Validity

External validity is concerned with generalizability or the extent to which the findings can be generalized beyond the specific research context. A typical criticism of qualitative studies is that they are context-bound and therefore weak in terms of external validity. Peräkylä (1997: 214) points out that generalizability 'is closely dependent on the type of conversation analytic research' and indeed there is variation in the generalizability of the studies in this collection. It is sometimes not appreciated that CA studies may analyse on the micro and macro level simultaneously. So, by explicating the organization of the micro-interaction in a particular social setting, CA studies may at the same time be providing some aspects of a generalizable description of the interactional organization of the setting. This is the case because interaction is seen as rationally organized in relation to social goals (Levinson 1992: 71). CA studies in effect work on the particular and the general simultaneously; by analysing

individual instances, the machinery which produced these individual instances is revealed: ‘The point of working with actual occurrences, single instances, single events, is to see them as the products of a 'machinery' … The ethnomethodological objective is to generate formal descriptions of social actions which preserve and display the features of the machinery which produced them’ (Benson and Hughes 1991: 130-131).

For example, Bloch's chapter (this volume) makes the generalizable point that different research methodological approaches provide different pictures of the same individual's communicative competence. A focus on the individual in dysarthric speech production using a speech signal intelligibility model tends to provides a 'deficit' picture, with the degree of severity being based upon a perceptual or instrumental analysis. Seen from this perspective, dysarthria is a medical label that describes a form of speech production but does not indicate the consequences of that production upon conversation or social action. Bloch, by contrast, reveals how the dysarthric individual is able to co-construct words and multi-word utterances with the help of another person, so the picture presented is one of competencies[2].

Ecological validity

Ecological validity is concerned with whether findings are applicable to people's everyday life; laboratory experiments in the social sciences can often be weak in terms of ecological validity. CA practitioners typically record naturally occurring talk in its authentic social setting, attempting to develop an emic, holistic perspective and to portray how the interactants perform their social actions through talk by reference

to the same interactional organizations which the interactants are using. Therefore CA studies tend to be exceptionally strong by comparison to other research methodologies in terms of ecological validity. Vinkhuyzen et al.'s study (this volume) of requests for service in one very specific ecological system (a reprographics shop in California) reveals that requests which are linguistically formatted as other-oriented interrogatives tend to cause problems for the service providers, whereas those packaged as self-oriented declaratives do not. Because the analysis is so firmly grounded in the specific ecological system, the reflexive relationship between linguistic formatting and institutional context is abundantly clear. Contrast this with the disappointing results of decontextualised studies of requests reviewed by Levinson (1983). Since, as mentioned in the previous section, CA portrays individual instances as products of a machinery, the analysis is not limited to one particular reprographics shop, so some generalizable findings emerge. For example, different linguistic packaging of requests can expose the inherent conflict in service industries of satisfying the customer and maximising profits.

Construct Validity, Epistemology and Ontology

In this section I will consider construct validity, epistemology and ontology together. Construct validity[3] is a vital concept in a positivistic, quantitative paradigm (Bryman 2001). However, in an emic paradigm the question is: whose construct is it? Typically, descriptivist linguists look for etically specifiable methods of description, so that an analyst can match surface linguistic features of the interaction to constructs and categories. In an emic perspective, however, we are looking for constructs to

which participants orient during interaction, which is not necessarily the same thing. Epistemologically, CA is based on ethnomethodology, (for a discussion, see Heritage (1984b) and Seedhouse (2004)) located (Lynch 2000) in a phenomenological paradigm, which considers that 'it is the job of the social scientist to gain access to people's 'common-sense thinking' and hence to interpret their actions and their social world from their point of view.' (Bryman 2001: 14). Ethnomethodology's ontological position can be associated with constructionism or the belief that 'social phenomena and their meanings are constantly being accomplished by social actors'. (Bryman 2001: 18). Hence, CA sees social constructs as being talked in and out of being by interactants.

I will illustrate how this position with respect to construct validity, ontology and epistemology functions in practice by reference to Markee's chapter (this volume). Task-based Learning (TBL) has assumed a central role in applied linguistics research, particularly in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). TBL/SLA operates predominantly in a quantitative paradigm[4] (Lazaraton 2000) which in turn assumes the importance of construct validity (Long 1997) and a fundamentally objectivist ontological position. This means that the construct 'task' has to have a tangible objective reality of its own and be concretely specifiable. In TBL/SLA, task is conceived of as a workplan (Ellis 2003: 9) made prior to classroom implementation of what the teachers and learners will do. This is therefore specified etically, reflecting the objectivist position (Bryman 2001: 17) that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors. Though the task-as-workplan may materially exist in the physical shape of a lesson plan or coursebook unit, it does not exist as an interactive event since it is defined as a plan.

Markee's chapter demonstrates how learners recorded working on a pairwork task can switch instantly from on-task institutional talk to off-task social talk. Markee demonstrates how the learners in the extract carefully disguise their social talk (relating to a party invitation) from the teacher and are able to instantly switch back on-task when required. In other words, the interactants can talk the relevance of the construct 'task' in and out of being from one moment to the next. A number of research studies (Coughlan and Duff 1994; Donato 2000; Foster 1998; Ohta 2000; Mori 2002; Seedhouse, 2004) confirm that there is often a very significant difference between what is supposed to happen (intended pedagogy) and what actually happens (actual pedagogy) in task-based pedagogy. From the ontological perspective, this causes fundamental problems for an objectivist position. The task-as-workplan, which is taken to be the basis of construct validity with an objective reality, may be re-interpreted, ignored or marginalized by the interactants and hence have a very weak ontology in interaction. By contrast, the constructivist position is ontologically strong; the object of study is simply whatever the interactants actually orient to during the interaction.

The constructs which are revealed by CA are those to which the participants themselves orient during interaction, rather than those which may be pre-specified in a priori fashion by analysts. The knowledge which is created is that of the social world, social phenomena and categories which are talked into being in a sequential environment by the participants themselves. From a broader perspective, CA creates knowledge of how social acts are performed in interaction and of how interaction itself is organized. Ontologically, CA studies that which the interactants themselves

make relevant or talk into being. The constructs studied are therefore those which have reality for the interactants.

Quantification

The short and simple way to present the CA attitude to quantification would be to state that CA is a qualitative methodology which tries to develop an emic perspective, so quantification is generally of peripheral interest to CA practitioners. It has often been mistakenly reported that quantification is prohibited in CA. However, informal or methodological quantification has been widely used from the beginnings of CA. Schegloff et al. (1977), for example, report self-correction as 'vastly more common than other-correction'. The classic statement of the CA position on quantification is Schegloff (1993), who warns specifically against premature quantification in relation to superficially identifiable interactional phenomena, which will tend to divert our attention from detailed analysis of individual instances. As Schegloff (1993: 114) puts it, 'Quantification is no substitute for analysis.' Nevertheless, Heritage (1999: 70) considers the likelihood that CA will become more quantitative during the next period of its development and identifies (1995: 404) a number of possible uses for statistics in CA:

- As a means of isolating interesting phenomena.
- As a means of consolidating intuitions which are well defined, but where the existence of a practice is difficult to secure without a large number of cases.
- In cases in which independent findings about a conversational practice can have indirect statistical support.

- In almost all cases where a claim is made that the use or outcome of a particular interactional practice is tied to particular social or psychological categories, such as gender, status etc. statistical support will be necessary.

Gardner's chapter (this volume) provides an excellent example of quantification which is built on and complementary to CA qualitative analysis. Gardner's CA analysis of a mother and a therapist working on speech with the same child identifies two phenomena (length of bout and the focus of repair-initiation) as constituting significant differences in approach by the two adults, the CA analysis uncovering an emic logic which connects the two phenomena. Schegloff (1993: 114) notes that 'We need to know what the phenomena are, how they are organized, and how they are related to each other as a precondition for cogently bringing methods of quantitative analysis to bear on them' and in Gardner's chapter this stage has been reached. Quantification then confirms that there is an overall significant difference in length of bout in relation to the two adults. Furthermore, Gardner quantifies different turn types which had previously been identified during the CA stage, relating these findings to the therapeutic outcomes achieved by the therapist and the mother. When considering applications of CA in professional and institutional contexts, we should take into account that many professions and institutions use numerical data as a prime source of evidence for their decision-making. Therefore, Gardner's combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches is likely to strengthen the professional credibility of her claims.

Triangulation and Ethnographic Data Sources

Given the emic goal of CA, there is no substitute for detailed and in-depth analysis of individual sequences; interviews, questionnaires and observations are not able to provide this, which is why *triangulation* and other data-gathering techniques typical of ethnography are not generally undertaken. However, there is currently a movement to integrate CA and ethnography. Recent papers (Auer 1995; Silverman 1999) have attempted a rapprochement between these two methodological approaches. Silverman's basic argument is that the two approaches are compatible and may be applied to the same instances of talk. An initial CA analysis of *how* participants locally produce context for their interaction can be followed by an ethnographic analysis of *why* questions about institutional and cultural constraints, thus moving from the micro to the macro levels. Auer (1995: 427) points out that data collection procedures in ethnography are eclectic by principle and therefore incorporate CA methods. Another issue of recent interest (e.g. Arminen 2000) has been the extent to which CA analyses of institutional discourse make use of ethnographic or expert knowledge of the institutional setting. Arminen's argument is that CA analysts inevitably do make use of such knowledge and should make as transparent as possible the extent to which their analyses derive from the details of the interaction or from use of ethnographic or expert knowledge.

This collection contains two studies which demonstrate the possibility of combining CA and ethnography in a mutually reinforcing way. Vinkhuyzen et al's recorded data derive from one stage of a 3-year ethnographic study, the other two stages being ethnographic observation, shadowing and interviewing as well as participant observation. The expert knowledge which they obtained of the economics of the business helps the authors explain the institutional significance of the different ways

in which customers package their requests. Gafaranga and Britten carried out pre- and post-consultation interviews with patients and doctors were interviewed post-consultation. In a deviant case, where a doctor used *What can I do for you?* with a patient whom he knew very well, a post-consultation interview revealed that this patient had abused the health system and the doctor was deliberately and strategically distancing himself from the patient by choice of topic initial elicitor. In this case, then, ethnographic information was able to shed light on a deviant case and this served to reinforce the argument which the authors had already built on sequential analysis.

Attitude to Context

CA has a dynamic, complex and highly empirical perspective on context. The basic aim is to establish an emic perspective, i.e. to determine which elements of context are relevant to the interactants at any point in the interaction. The perspective is also an active one in which participants are seen to talk a context into being or out of being. The perspective is dynamic in that, as Heritage (1984b: 242) puts it, 'The context of a next action is repeatedly renewed with every current action' and is transformable at any moment. A basic assumption of CA is that contributions to interaction are *context-shaped* and *context-renewing*. Contributions are context-shaped in that they cannot be adequately understood except by reference to the sequential environment in which they occur and in which the participants design them to occur. Contributions are context-renewing in that they create a sequential environment or template in which a next contribution will occur. So Markee's chapter (this volume), for example, shows how interactants instantly talk out of being the

official pedagogical context and talk into being an alternative 'social' context. We cannot assume that one single contextual feature or membership category will remain relevant throughout a whole interactional sequence. Different contextual elements may be talked in and out of being and relevance as the sequence progresses and the participants themselves may negotiate or dispute their relevance. Kurhila's chapter (this volume) demonstrates a dynamic perspective on context and shows how the participants themselves may orient differently to contextual features or membership categories. In Kurhila's extract 4, one participant tries to foreground his identity as non-native speaker and have his conversational partner help with his problems with linguistic form. The other participant, however, resists this by foregrounding their respective institutional identities as secretary and student and prioritizes the institutional business of completing a form.

CA sees the underlying machinery which generates interaction as being both context-free and operating in context-sensitive ways. The structural organizations can be seen as the context-free resources in that their organization can be specified as a series of norms in isolation from any specific instance of interaction, but the application of these organizations is context-sensitive in that interactants use the organization of (for example) turn-taking to display their understanding of context. So professionals and lay clients may talk an institutional context into being through the professional taking control of the turn-taking system; we understand this by reference to the context-free norms. By tracing how the context-free resources are employed and manifested locally in a context-sensitive manner, we are able to uncover the underlying machinery. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998: 36) put it, ‘The aim of conversation

analysis … is to explicate the structural organization of talk in interaction at this interface between context-free resources and their context-sensitive applications.'

The final aspect to the rather complex CA perspective on context is that sequential location is as a major part of what we mean by context. Two examples are provided, one from non-verbal communication and one from verbal communication. Dickerson et al.'s chapter (this volume) demonstrates the significance of sequential placement as context. Traditionally, gaze abnormalities (particularly gaze aversion) are cited as a 'symptom' of autism by many professional groups. However, Dickerson et al. carefully relate gaze activity in a sequential location to the activities of referring and addressing and demonstrate that children diagnosed as autistic can deploy 'competent and sophisticated eye gaze practice.' Sequential location, then, provides a 'context' for the significance of gaze. Vowel-marking by Japanese novice ESL learners has been generally treated as an L1 interference phenomenon. However, Carroll's chapter (this volume) shows that learners systematically and strategically employ vowel-marking as part of forward-oriented repair, so that sequential location determines where vowel-marking is most likely to occur. In Carroll's data, vowel-marking tends to precede intra-turn pauses (oh dees dees is-u (0.22)) and to precede a sought-for-item (it's-u: raining).

Themes for Development

In this final section I tie together themes which have emerged in the collection and look to possible future research developments.

CA has proved able to provide a 'holistic' portrayal of language use which reveals the reflexive relationships between form, function, sequence and social identity and social/institutional context. In all chapters we see that the organization of the talk relates directly and reflexively to the social goals of the participants, whether institutional or otherwise. In Bloch's chapter we see how the participants develop an extraordinary speech-exchange system in orientation to their goal of having as 'ordinary' a relationship and a conversation as possible under the circumstances. Gafaranga and Britten's chapter demonstrates how doctors systematically use different 'social' opening sequences to talk different professional relationships into being. Packett's chapter identifies an insertion sequence which is directly related to the institutional goal of informing an unseen but overhearing audience. Gardner's chapter shows how a therapist and a mother organize their talk with a child differently due to their different belief systems. In Markee's chapter we see how the students cunningly organize their verbal and non-verbal communication in order to conceal from the teacher their project of off-task social talk.

A recurrent theme in this collection is that interactants do not always share the same social goals or the same understanding of context and their respective roles. Egbert demonstrates the very different orientations which a landlady and potential tenant have towards the prospective goal of letting a flat. Vinkhuyzen et al. show how staff and customers in service encounters may have very different views of how the service should proceed. Benwell and Stokoe's and Markee's studies demonstrate how students may resist tasks which teachers ask them to carry out. Both Kurhila's and Wong's chapters reveal different orientations to grammatical correctness on the part of native speakers and non-native speakers. In all cases, however, CA is able to portray the

progress of the participants' intersubjectivity. Taken as a whole, the collection demonstrates that in naturally-occurring interaction, social actors negotiate an extremely diverse range of social and institutional goals by deploying an equally diverse verbal and non-verbal repertoire in a dynamic and mutable environment. The collection shows that CA is able to handle this level of heterogeneity and mutability and also make itself relevant on a practical level in terms of applications. This is the case because, whatever the specific type of human activity, CA is able to provide the emic perspective and to portray the reflexive relationship between the social and interactional levels.

CA is able to grow organically to accommodate new dimensions. Its current stage of growth is marked by linguistic and cultural diversity. There are now CA studies of interaction in a number of different languages (reviewed in Schegloff et al. 2002; Seedhouse 2004) and early criticisms that CA was biased as it was based almost exclusively on English native-speaker interaction are no longer founded. This collection contains chapters on NS-NNS interaction in Finnish (Kurhila) and German (Egbert) as well as English (Wong), multilingual code-switching (Torras) and all the indications are that the trend towards multi-lingual and multi-cultural applied CA studies will continue; see in particular Gardner and Wagner (2004). Torras's chapter shows that CA is particularly well suited to the portrayal of the social dimensions of language choice. Torras uncovers the subtle, complex and reflexive relationship between multiple social identities in relation to language choice, roles in service transactions and degrees of acquaintanceship. The chapter challenges static and monolithic conceptions of social identity and presents language preference as a platform for the display of identity sets relevant to the interaction. Interactants are

shown to negotiate and switch between multiple identities, multiple types of relationship with each other and multiple languages; these are shown to be interdependent.

The finding in several chapters that oral production problems are sometimes related to interactional issues rather than internal mechanisms has many implications for future research. Chapters by Dickerson et al., Markee and Carroll demonstrate the importance of delicate transcription and analysis of gaze and non-verbal communication as interactive resources. A particularly strong theme to emerge from the collection was the similarities between native speaker - non-native speaker talk and talk in communication disorder settings. The similarities emerged in interactional patterns but also in the way in which a CA approach challenged static linguistic deficit models and highlighted interactive competencies. This approach may be used to investigate a wider range of settings in which speakers are assumed to be less than competent. An important epistemological point is that the knowledge which we build of the communicative abilities of individuals depends crucially on the methodology used to study them. If individuals are asked to produce speech in isolation, which is then segmented, quantified and compared to a norm, the result will inevitably be presented in terms of deficit. By contrast, a holistic view of the same individuals in interaction may reveal the inventive ways in which they are able to co-construct meaning with their interactional partners: see also Gardner & Wagner (2004).

Individual chapters suggest areas for future research and the individual chapters provide models of applied CA research. The three chapters on communication disorders suggest fruitful areas for research in therapeutic contexts, while the range of

the four chapters on professional interaction indicates what an enormous scope there is for CA studies in diverse professional areas; see also Asmuss & Steensig (2003). A theme common to all of the studies is how professionals are best able to orient their clients to the institutional goal, and this is likely to be applicable to all professional contexts. The study of discrimination introduced by Egbert (this volume) is one with considerable potential for development, as is the theme common to the three chapters of how native speakers invoke and negotiate identities through talk. There are many areas for CA to explore in the area of native speaker/nonnative speaker interaction and language learning. For example, Carroll (this volume) reveals the potential of studying learner talk, while Packett (this volume) demonstrates that analysis of professional talk may be very relevant to the teaching of Languages for Specific Purposes. The issues and possibilities are discussed in Jacoby (1998a, b), Koshik (2000), Markee (2000) and Seedhouse (2004). Language proficiency assessment design may be informed by CA, as previous work in this area by Young and He (1998), Lazaraton (1997) and Kasper and Ross (2001) demonstrates. The finding of this collection that communicative competence is not a static construct invites future research. The collection demonstrates that CA is able to tackle many areas of interest to applied linguistics. Richards' and Drew's papers (this volume) outline the relationship between CA and AL, and all indications are that this will continue to be fruitful and that applications of CA are likely to increase in volume and scope.

[1] For an example of a 'linguistic' misunderstanding of CA, see Seedhouse (2004, chapter 1).

[2] Bloch (personal communication) points out that we cannot generalize that all dysarthric conversations are like those analysed here. However, because they appear so unusual, they require a method that allows us to describe the mechanism beneath the surface individuality.

[3] Construct validity has to do with the question of 'whether a measure that is devised of a concept really does reflect the concept that it is supposed to be denoting' (Bryman 2001: 30).

[4] The assumption of a predominantly quantitative paradigm does not of course imply that qualitative work is not undertaken in TBL/SLA; see, for example, Hall and Verplaetse 2000; Ohta 2000. However, Lazaraton (2000) found in a study of empirical articles in four prominent language teaching/SLA journals over a seven-year period that 88% were quantitative. There is considerable debate as to the legitimacy of the term 'quantitative paradigm'. This study adopts Bryman's (2001) position with respect to quantitative and qualitative research. This is that it is possible to distinguish differences between quantitative and qualitative research strategies in terms of the role of theory in research, epistemology and ontology. However, these should be seen as tendencies and there are complex interconnections between the two strategies. Furthermore, in some circumstances and if carefully planned, the two strategies may be combined in multi-strategy research.